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C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 000879

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/SE, EUR/SCE

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [BK](#) [CY](#)

SUBJECT: CYPRIOT VIEWS ON NEW EU APPROACH IN BOSNIA

REF: SECSTATE 113894

Classified By: DCM Jonathan Cohen, Reasons 1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (C) On November 3, Poloff delivered Reftel demarche concerning USG views on the deteriorating situation in Bosnia to MFA Department of Multilateral Affairs and International Organizations attache Doros Venizis. Venizis stated that Cyprus and the broader EU share the same concerns as the USG and would like to see Bosnia focus on stronger engagement with the EU. Venizis expects to see these concerns expressed in the conclusions of the November 10 GAERC meeting.

¶2. (C) On the status of the Office of the High Representative (OHR), Venizis noted that Cyprus and the EU view the situation between now and the March 2009 Peace Implementation Council (PIC) meeting as crucial. Venizis said that despite the liklihood that most conditions of the 5-plus-2 agenda will not be met by March, most EU member states still prefer closing the OHR rather than renewing it for another two years. Venizis said that most member states understand that firmness on all of the 5-plus-2 conditions is crucial to ensure credibility, and therefore he expects to see ongoing discussions among member states to encourage speedier implementation before the March 2009 conference. In case that the OHR does close, Venizis said that Cyprus and most member states would prefer that the EU military operation in Bosnia, ALTHEA, stay on with reduced numbers and/or in a transformed role to help stabilize the political situation. (Note: EUFOR's website on November 6 reported that the GAERC had decided to reduce the size of the operation while still maintaining a robust military force in Bosnia.)

¶3. (C) On Republika Srpska separatism, Venizis stated that Cyprus would rather not take any specific measures that single out Republika Srpska, in order to reduce overall tensions in Bosnia. Venizis noted that Cyprus would instead support a statement that denounced separatism broadly. Urbancic